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Escalation Is Madness, Sen. McGovern Asserts

By United Press International

Sen. George S. McGovern, D-S.D., today accused the Johnson administration of following a "policy of madness" in stepping up the Vietnam war and blaming its critics for escalation's failure to end the conflict.

The former bomber pilot told the Senate he does not blame Gen. William C. Westmoreland for decrying critics of U.S. military policy "because he is obviously doing both in Vietnam or in New York exactly what he is told to do by his commander in chief, the President."

Westmoreland, in a speech in New York yesterday, said the enemy in Vietnam had "gained support" in the United States and abroad that offers him hope for a political victory.

McGovern said America's deepening involvement in the war is the "most tragic diplomatic and moral failure in our national experience."

Paying tribute to Westmoreland and his fellow officers and enlisted men, McGovern said: "These brave men are in Vietnam because of the shortsightedness of our political and diplomatic policymakers."

Then he added: "In trying to imply that it is American dissent which is causing the Vietnamese to continue the war, the administration is only confessing the weakness of its own case by trying to silence its critics and confuse the American people."

"It is not the impact of the dissent on Hanoi that worries the administration—it is the fact that the dissenters have exposed the contradictions, the falsehood, and the resulting credibility gap which surrounds administration policy."

McGovern said the new level of escalation, marked by the bombing of MIG airfields in North Vietnam, has "brought us one step closer to World War III involving the limitless legions of China backed by the enormous firepower of Soviet Russia."